

March 19, 2018

## **CITY COUNCIL AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

### **SUBJECT**

Resolution authorizing execution of a Professional Services Agreement with Balmori Associates to provide design and other related services for the development of design guidelines for the Grand Connection, in an amount not to exceed \$125,000.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

This contract allows the City to spend up to \$125,000 for design services related to the Grand Connection Visioning. This expenditure is part of Council's prior approval of \$1,500,000 for the implementation of the Grand Connection project in the 2017-2018 budget (CIP Plan No. CD-44 Grand Connection Implementation).

The proposed consultant work is for an estimated \$125,000. All expenditures will be monitored by staff and additional services will not be requested from the consultant unless sufficient funds are available to cover the services.

### **STAFF CONTACTS**

Mac Cummins, Planning and Community Development Director, 452-6191

Bradley Calvert, Community Development Program Manager, 452-6930

*Department of Planning and Community Development*

### **POLICY CONSIDERATION**

RCW 39.80.010:

*The legislature hereby establishes a state policy, to the extent provided in this chapter, that governmental agencies publicly announce requirements for architectural and engineering services, and negotiate contracts for architectural and engineering services on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualification for the type of professional services required and at fair and reasonable prices.*

City Staff publicly announced the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) through several forms of print and online media, as well as distribution through the Public Purchase procurement portal, and through email solicitation. The contracted firm was selected based upon their expertise with developing design guidelines and their ability to refine the *Grand Connection Framework Plan* vision (adopted by Council in December of 2017).

### **BACKGROUND**

Beginning in April of 2016, the Grand Connection visioning process sought to create a unique and dynamic vision for the non-motorized corridor, that would create a unique urban experience. The visioning process included the development of an overarching identity, cohesive design strategies, improvements to mobility and connectivity, improvements to public spaces, and the visioning of a signature crossing over Interstate 405. The visioning process was separated into two sequences of work with the first focusing on the segment from Meydenbauer Bay Park (intersection of Main Street and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE) to the Civic District, including the route's overarching identity and cohesive design

strategies into the Wilburton Commercial Area. The second sequence of work focused on the development of three alternatives to cross Interstate 405 and interface with the Wilburton Commercial Area and the Eastside Rail Corridor.

The Wilburton-Grand Connection study will seek a new land use vision for the Wilburton Commercial Area that will capitalize on forthcoming infrastructure and transportation improvements as well as its proximity to the high growth centers of Downtown and BelRed. Ultimately the vision is for Wilburton to serve a unique niche in Bellevue, complementing its adjacent high growth centers. The Wilburton-Grand Connection study includes visioning from Meydenbauer Bay to the Eastside Rail Corridor. The two phases of the project will employ separate consultants for the Wilburton Land Use and Urban Design study and the Grand Connection Visioning.

In December of 2017 staff presented the final draft of the *Grand Connection Framework Plan* for adoption. The Plan focused on Sequence One of the visioning process and established the high-level visioning strategies that will define the corridor. Council adopted the Plan and initiated staff to begin Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Land Use Code Updates, including the updating of the Pedestrian Corridor design guidelines into the Grand Connection design guidelines.

The scope of this effort will seek to refine many of the high-level concepts developed as part of the Plan including, but not limited to, paving strategies, weather protection, vegetation, and public space. The final deliverable will include refined concepts for public spaces and design guidelines that will be incorporated as part of the Land Use Code, updating the existing Pedestrian Corridor design guidelines.

The City used a robust RFQ and Request for Proposals (RFP) process, as well as in-person interviews to assemble a talented and diverse applicant pool. After careful deliberation, staff has selected Balmori Associates to serve as the lead consultant for the Grand Connection design guidelines. The team, including sub-consultants, will consist of the following:

- Balmori Associates – Project Lead
- HR&A Advisors – Economics & Stakeholder Engagement
- Mobility in Chain – Mobility Consultant
- Knippers Helbig – Structural Engineering
- Langan Engineers – Land Development Engineers
- Herrera – Public Engagement, Environmental Engineering, Guideline Writing

The project team was selected for their expertise in developing implementable design guidelines of projects with similar scope and scale. The project team provided examples of guidelines from Seattle, Moscow, San Francisco, and Sejong City, South Korea. Balmori Associates also served as the lead urban design team for the Grand Connection visioning process.

The firm has received awards and grants from the American Institute of Architects – New York, Connecticut, and New England Chapters, American Society of Landscape Architects, The Institute of Green Professionals, International Association of Art Critics, and several other awards for urban design, landscape architecture, and sustainability.

Joining their team, and serving as their local contact will be the environmental, public engagement, and urban design team of Herrera. Their staff will lead and implement the public engagement strategy while

offering environmental engineering expertise and technical guideline writing. HR&A advisors will assist in stakeholder engagement and economics of the design guidelines. Their instrumental work in obtaining stakeholder buy-in for the High Line in New York City assisted in the project coming to fruition as well as realizing the economic development potential of the project.

Upon completion of the consultant's work, the new design guidelines for the Grand Connection will be incorporated into the Land Use Code, as well as refinements for public spaces and other related design concepts.

The request for a total of \$125,000 covers all fees and anticipated expenses related to the services of the attached Scope of Work.

### **Selection Method**

A RFQ was released on January 8 and closed on January 29. The RFQ was advertised in the *Seattle Times* and *Daily Journal of Commerce*.

The submittals were reviewed, and evaluated by staff including Planning and Community Development, Economic Development, Arts, Development Services, Parks and Community Services, and Transportation. Evaluation was based on criteria set forth in the scope of work in the RFQ. This criteria included the following:

- Demonstrated experience with similar non-motorized corridor projects;
- Demonstrated quality of experience with projects that represent the quality of work the City aspires for the Grand Connection;
- Expertise of the project team;
- Expertise of the key personnel;
- Demonstrated experience developing high quality graphic representation;
- Demonstrated experience developing code and guideline language; and
- Demonstrated understanding of the project.

Following review of the submittals, four firms were selected to submit proposals and conduct interviews with City staff. These four firms were chosen based on a scoring and ranking of their qualifications using the above-mentioned criteria. In their proposals, the selected firms were asked to provide the following:

- A list of anticipated core staff, their roles, and time commitment to the project including hourly fee;
- A narrative describing their approach to the project;
- The suggested role in public engagement and interaction with stakeholders;
- A proposed schedule/timeline;
- A generalized breakdown of the proposed budget;
- One project example for each of the following with a brief narrative describing its relevance to the scope of work; and:
  - A non-motorized corridor or pedestrian and cyclist oriented project realized from vision, to code/guideline, to implementation.
  - Excerpts from design guidelines exhibiting:
    - Graphic representation
    - Code and guideline language

- Graphic layout
  - Role of proposed team members
- Up to two examples of projects that implemented design guidelines crafted by proposed members of the consultant team where the design of the public (plazas, streetscapes, etc.) improved, supported, and cultivated activation and programming.
- An example of the team approach to integrated art as part of the streetscape or public realm.
- A single project that best demonstrates the firm's design approach and philosophy.
- Sample presentation graphics representative of the quality of the final deliverables anticipated.

Interviews with the four firms were held on February 12 and 13 at Bellevue City Hall. City staff convened on February 14 and 16 to discuss the interviews, submitted RFP's and presentations that each team provided during the interviews.

Following review of the RFPs and interviews, Balmori Associates was recommended to serve as the consultant. The total contract value is \$125,000 for a duration of approximately one year.

The selection process and proposed agreement are consistent with the City's contracting and purchasing policies.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

If approved, this Resolution becomes effective immediately upon Council adoption.

#### **OPTIONS**

1. Adopt the Resolution authorizing execution of a Professional Services Agreement with Balmori Associates to provide design and other related services for the development of design guidelines for the Grand Connection, in an amount not to exceed \$125,000.
2. Do not adopt the Resolution and provide alternative direction to staff.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Option 1

#### **MOTION**

Move to adopt Resolution No. 9386 authorizing execution of a Professional Services Agreement with Balmori Associates to provide design and other related services for the development of design guidelines for the Grand Connection, in an amount not to exceed \$125,000.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Proposed Resolution No. 9386

#### **AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL DOCUMENT LIBRARY**

- A. Draft Professional Services Agreement with Balmori Associates
- B. Request for Qualifications